


# The Hole

*December 1997*



*Mount Wachusett Community College*



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## Two Inches Short of Manhood

For some the measure of manhood comes on the battlefield. For others, it may be the playing field, the weight room, or standing up to the schoolyard bully. And for some, it might come in the quiet observation of the health club locker room. For me that "golden moment" when my manliness was to be proven to the world was at the Topsfield fairgrounds. It was a chilly October evening and the air was filled with the unmistakable aroma of fried dough, cotton candy and nature's beasts. No, I wasn't driving a team of muscle-bound Clydesdales in the horse pulls. No, I wasn't the one who caught the greased pig, shaved a sheep in fifteen seconds, or worked the truck accessory booth. I was the guy who was trying to ring the bell at the top of that long vertical pole with a wooden mallet. You know, the one strong men walk up to and smash, sending a small metal shuttle up a towering shaft past all those flamboyant little titles that get more socially acceptable the closer they are to the bell. The bell that echoes over the fairground and everyone turns to see this man standing there with huge forearms and a strong back while saying and pointing, "There is a **Real man!**" Tonight was finally my time. The bell would toll for me! I paid my dollar and stepped up to the test.

I stood there facing the giant challenge like a modern day Ulysses. That bell staring down at me like the singular eye of a Cyclops, looking down and laughing at my small frame and attempt. For a moment, as if I had eyes in the back of my head, I could see them, the gathering crowd. I could see my girlfriend there, too. I so very desperately wanted to win her a stuffed prize. Most of all I wanted **them** to see **her** with a **Real man!** I wanted to turn from ringing the bell and triumphantly extend my reward to her. She would hug or kiss me; her affection, my real reward. I grasped the hammer with both hands and jerked it from where it lay on the ground. Fooled by its looks, the hammer was very light, and I staggered back from using too much force to lift such a light object. Fear struck me as I thought, "This hammer doesn't have enough weight to it!" I then realized I was going to have to put all I had into this swing. I had wasted enough time... I swung the hammer back and brought it around in one beautiful, graceful, exquisite arc. The head of the hammer touched down squarely on the plate, in perfect position. The plate pivoted on its fulcrum and shot the shuttle upward toward its destination.

Up past **limp-wristed!**

Up past **bedwetter!**

Up past **nose picker!**

Up past **momma's boy!**

Past **dude!**

Past **big guy!**

Stopping two inches short of the bell?

Stopping two inches short of **Real man!**

Jim Tedesco

## ***Robot Mom***

*Performing my mundane tasks efficiently,  
pursuing input of family needs.  
But sometimes I feel I've blown a fuse  
because I never get to rest.*

*My emotions are held within,  
the forgotten human being inside  
the mechanical skeleton.*

*Performing to commands like a mechanical  
puppet on strings, controlled by others' fantasies,  
forgetting all my fantasies.*

*No time to think, to eat or sleep  
because my programming is not complete.*

*My programming is a characteristic of my mechanical construction.  
Experiencing occasional short circuits, in my excellent design.  
My energy is nil, I must continue on.*

*Because I am a robot mom.*

*Sandra Dejnak*

*What is Death?*

*Is it the cessation of life?*

*Is it the passage into a "better world?"*

*Or is it merely the loss of the conscious mind?*

*A passage into the unconscious*

*Into a simple state of nonexistence.*

*The loss of sensation.*

*The loss of perception.*

*The darkest blindness.*

*the most deafening silence.*

*Nothing to smell 'cept the rot of your own body.*

*Nothing to feel but the claustrophobia and the burrowing worm.*

*The euphoria of not being able to be heard*

*And the utopia of not caring.*

*A simple state of nonexistence.*

*No more worries of disease*

*no more worries of violence*

*No more worries of age*

*The simple art of unconsciousness.*

*No need to eat*

*No need for drink*

*No need of family*

*No need of Love*

*A state of eternal sleep.*

*The ending fate of every man.*

*There are no exceptions*

*Everyone must die*

*Dreams of immortality are a fool's device*

*The skin goes blue and cold as ice*

*The body, rigid, over which weeping mourners stand in black.*

*The loss of a friend, father, brother, Lover.*

*The loss of a sister, mother, and wife.*

*No one is spared the fate of death.*

*What is death?*

*jmc*

## September's Song

Drip, drip, drip...the sound woke me this morning. It's raining, I thought. I opened my eyes and squinted as the sunlight struck my face. Very strange! The sky is shining blue between the slats, but the sound of rain persists.

I rise and run to the window, pulling up the blind. The sun shimmers on the drops cascading down from the edge of the roof above. It glints on the wet tiles of the porch roof below the sill, and turns to iridescence the steam spiraling up from the frosty layer set down by the early morning air.

September, a month of transition, is upon us. Each day starts in the chill of autumn, but later the glow of the sun warms the air to near summer temperatures. As the day progresses, we shed our layers of warmth like reptiles so that we may bask yet one more time in the glorious gift of the seasons. The tired, dusty leaves of the trees are slowly replaced by bright and cheerful reds and oranges, and golds. The vibrant summer flowers are gone, and in their place we see the subdued hues of mums and asters. The zucchini and tomatoes have given way to mounds of pumpkins and baskets of apples at the roadside vegetable stands.

This, then, is the last hurrah of the year. Mother Nature's pulling out all the stops for that one final burst of blazing and melodious splendor. Soon will come the quiet sepia tones of deep autumn and then the black and white hush of winter.

Jeanne Hue

## **Golgotha**

*by Shawn P. Bernard*

*So Jesus,  
Old blue-eyed Golgotha lamb,  
How bodes the wrought iron confines of heaven?  
Are you still barefoot and pregnant in the soul?*

*I've been doing time in the universal mind  
And see traces of you everywhere,  
You old tree of life virgin bastard...*

*So Jesus  
Has the populace figured out that your eyes are not blue?  
Has the congregation stain glass saints yet given truth to your skin,  
Or given all of your lily-white reflection back to the earth  
You old Golgotha lamb!  
Have you died for nothing?  
Will our propagators never learn to sell your love as it is?  
Raw and unwaxed without the dyes of glamour's appeal?*

*Old Golgotha lamb!  
Do not kneel down before the big screen television of heaven!  
As we kneel down before the big screens of American Glamour.  
America is dying,  
And Golgotha stands in our living room...  
Without  
    a spotless  
        lamb.*

*Oh Jesus!  
Golgotha high as hell!  
America is without vision!  
Golgotha high as hell!  
America is without a hero!  
Golgotha high as hell!  
America is without trial!  
Golgotha!  
Perfect Spotless Lamb!  
    When will we see our idols unplugged from their electric God-walls?*

*Golgotha...  
America is without vision  
Golgotha...  
America.  
Golgotha...*

## *Daddy's Little Girl*

*The grass grows green around the spot where your now unfamiliar body lies. I stare at the neatly engraved scriptures on the cold slate that stands before me. I wonder who worked so hard to make every line deep and beautifully carved. And I wonder if they know what kind of person you were. I'm sure they didn't know about your love, or your thirst for poison. About your talent for angry words and broken promises. How do you explain the colorful blossoms around your grave, when dead roots and rotten flowers were all my child eyes had ever seen?*

*He's here. Watching me. Rubbing the dust away from my dry eyes. And he wants to speak. Throw his fists up in the air and scream, "I'm sorry, God forgive me, I 'm so sorry!" To clench his jaw tight as tears rush from his eyes, wishing he could of turned back.*

*But God was watching as he laid passed out on my lap, his blood tainted with what his body yearned for day and night. And then, there were no more excuses, no more promises, no more I'm sorrys.*

*So now, all that is left to do is spy upon me. Listen to me at night when I thank God he took you out of my life. All that is left to do is roam this place full of faceless names, and wonder--who's taking care of daddy's little girl now?*

*jennifer shattuck*

*Wind*  
*heavy-laden with*  
*expectation*  
*Sends past fears spiraling*  
*away from*  
*the great and often unachievable*  
*pillar of success.*  
*Salty beads of perspiration*  
*streak through the brow*  
*now knotted in concentration.*  
*Piercing eyes search intently for*  
*the pinnacle*  
*of this day's journey,*  
*though never look back.*  
*Upwards*  
*the path leads the challenger*  
*as it has done for*  
*the many that have come before.*  
*Muscles*  
*in perfect unison*  
*work toward a common goal.*  
*The final push*  
*an end to this day's*  
*arduous adventure:*  
*VICTORY!*

### ***Hollow***

*walking through an empty abyss*  
*thinking of what happened to this,*  
*as I sat and listened to the words*  
*my heart broke into pieces,*  
*onto the floor with a single crash*  
*there are no words that can bring it back,*  
*so long ago it seemed,*  
*when we were one.*

*Cora Cleveland*

## *Reality Bites*

*As I lie in the lap of luxury  
Amused by my self worthlessness  
I ponder the meaning of my existence  
I realize how futile life really is  
I wonder who would want my life  
A six digit income  
Three new cars  
Plush uptown apartment  
I wonder who would actually want to live this way  
Married, no kids: too busy with our careers...*

*I startle back to reality as I hear the door open  
she enters and flips on the light  
The cockroaches scatter and hide from the blinding light  
The floor is dirt, the baby is screaming in the other room  
The apartment is small and by the track  
She is returning from her third job today  
She walked the mile home in the snow and cold  
She begins to whimper as she turns over her pay check  
No food this week, the baby eats first  
As I take her in my arms, to comfort and console, I realize...  
This is Reality...It Bites*

*jmc*

## *Reflections in a Mirror*

*She wasn't the prettiest girl, but there was something about her that people noticed. Even though her hips were a little too big, and her breasts weren't very large, people talked about her. You see, her beauty went a lot farther than her slightly pouty lips and unusually large eyes. It was something about her that shined. A blinding light that seemed to penetrate into the darkest of souls.*

*Men didn't flock around her when she entered a room. After she was there for a while, her conversation and her awkward laugh would summon them to her side. It was as if she'd cast a spell upon them. Because after all, she wasn't perfect. And you would probably agree that she would never grace the cover of a magazine.*

*You see, I saw her one day. She was sitting on the side of the road, rubbing her feet into the dirt, circling her fingers in the sand. She was brushing her hair away from her eyes. It wasn't long, flowing hair that blew in the wind. It was short and rustled; cropped to her head as though she cut it herself.*

*As she looked up, our eyes met. I stared at her. Trying to convince myself that all they say about her is true. And she smiled. She smiled as though I knew. As though I understood something about her, that maybe everyone else didn't...*

*jennifer shattuck*

## *Watchtower*

*Now's a time  
just as good as any to wander and  
look.  
No approach  
but a pen  
from group of three  
to black glass'd freaks  
and the world spins  
in gossip and fear  
--I don't belong here.  
And while I'm at it,  
Where are the rest of my shadows?  
Could they be buried in mind?  
And the watchtower gleams in the distance  
come along...  
...this is what it means  
to love.  
Be me for a day;  
you'll discover what  
it means to be free.  
Open up your  
mind and set it on fire.  
Lose yourself in the wind and  
see just how close  
the horizon is  
and it's just mindgames after all...  
listen to everything,  
you'll surprise yourself.  
You're beautiful after all...*

*Jeff Landry*

## *Haiku*

*Night takes me away  
As the pines whisper your name.  
Why am I still here?*

*Jeff Landry*

## *Unspoken Incantation*

*by candlelight,  
i am gentle hermit,  
rain patter on my shelter,  
mindful and selfless Zen,  
the sound of Tao,  
the only word with no  
pure grammatical explanation.  
and raindrop chorus  
a meditation in itself,  
one raindrop in billions;  
the sound of one raindrop  
falling.*

*an incantation  
for those with ears.  
spirit reminder,  
gently wears the stone  
of my being  
and dissolves my learned ways  
back to the essence of being  
uncarved,  
unborn,*

*can you understand existence  
of pure nonexistence.  
infinite empty infinity,  
yet infinitely whole.*

*and being,  
a lazy and rapid river.  
moving and being moved by  
the hand of our mother;  
sound of one hand  
clapping.*

*Shawn R. Bernard*

*My car and me. The road. Liberty.*

*Leaving my hometown. Leaving comfort and support. To find solace.*

*Inspiration awaits in the heartland of America, the canyon lands of the southwest, the mountains, the valleys, the plains. The city, the country, suburbia. Techno parks and amusement parks and city parks and playgrounds. Bars and restaurants, music halls and corners. And people. To meet people and live side by side. For inspiration. To advance my writing. To advance my life and change. The bayou, the prairies and swamps and cliffs and ridges and paths through the brush. To see where others have stepped and why.*

*It excites, the mere possibility. Highways and roads, the tools. They are for rent; my own personal tool is a car. A Nipponese pile of rubble. No creature comforts. No money. A bum rolling across the country. Conversation in Lunenburg: "So, how's school? Dorm life OK?"*

*"Ya, I'm having fun. It's a lot like high school. How's the Mount?"*

*"Good. But my journey across the country was better. It improved my life."*

*Jack Kennedy*

*Leave the masses  
Embrace the questions  
never asked of fallen gods*

*Symbolic gestures  
forsaken lectures  
Apocalyptic fallout*

*Drowning in a sea of tears  
of bodies laid in earthen dust  
upon the hollow cries  
of timber  
brought to shore  
upon the wind*

*We lie at rest  
in ancient slumber  
mourning  
burning  
leaves are falling*

*give us that of which we ask  
listen to our calling*

*I feel as though  
I am an aged woman  
hiding behind a face of youth  
A young girl  
flirting with a wisdom  
I will never understand*

*Do you understand me?  
or do you question my stare?  
I am, after all,  
the girl with intensely blue eyes  
a woman  
Camouflaged beneath strands of woven cotton  
and shiny pink lips*

*There is a deceit behind those blues  
Yet innocence closes over them  
Can you see me?  
Because your words  
are spoken to a place in me  
I do not see  
I feel naked  
Worthy of sex  
                    lust  
                    passion  
                    deception*

*But no love  
Why not love?*

*jennifer shattuck*

## ***Restless***

*My mind blank,  
and void of.*

*Nothing to share,  
or insight which I care.*

*I close my eyes,  
hands crossed upon my calm chest.*

*Waiting,  
waiting...*

*The television's light pierces,  
through my eyelids.*

*Blue,  
light.*

*I roll to my right,  
and left.*

*I hum a tune softly,  
tapping the beat with my right foot.*

*My eyes open,  
and close                      countless.*

*And finally,  
.....*

*Dan Patton*

## *Twilight*

*A tiny chill upon the breeze,  
a glimpse of scarlet in the wood  
The glittering mass of the milky way,  
All forewarn of autumn's coming.  
The scent of wood smoke,  
Ribbons of fog in the morning sunlight,  
And the deepening shadows of early evening  
Give notice of summer's demise.*

*And as Mother Nature winds her way  
Toward her soft and billowing bed  
She sheds her raiment of red and gold,  
Leaving it scattered across the ground,  
And pulling her comforter of white up to her chin  
She settles to sleep.*

*Jeanne Hue, 1997*

*Am I wrong to hate you father?  
Hate you in life  
and love you in death  
Did you ever really exist?  
I cannot remember your face  
but I remember the pain in  
your red eyes  
is that wrong?  
I cannot remember your stare  
but I remember my agony,  
the wretched ache in my soul  
when weekends would come*

*I dream of you father,  
in my sleep  
and your spirit is naked next to mine  
in an unfamiliar bed  
cover with deception  
sewn with your lies  
Fear washes over me  
A flood of confusion over the truth  
of our life together*

*I hear the song you'd wake me with  
but I cannot remember the words  
I envision your drunkenness  
passed out on the bathroom floor  
And still I cry  
Cry over a feeling inside me  
that I cannot identify  
Where does it come from?  
its point of origin unknown*

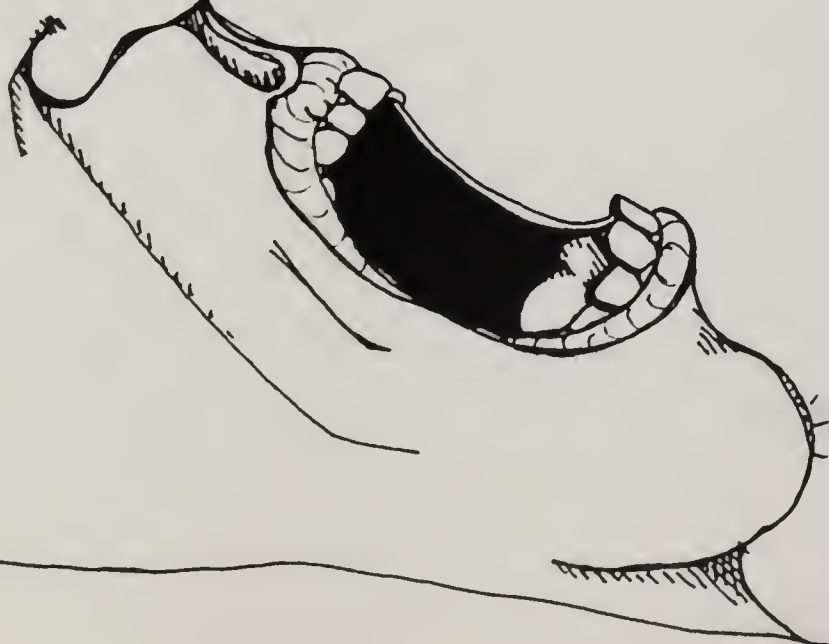
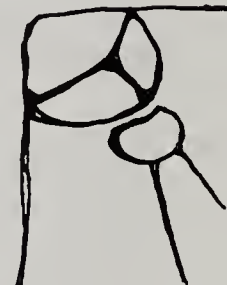
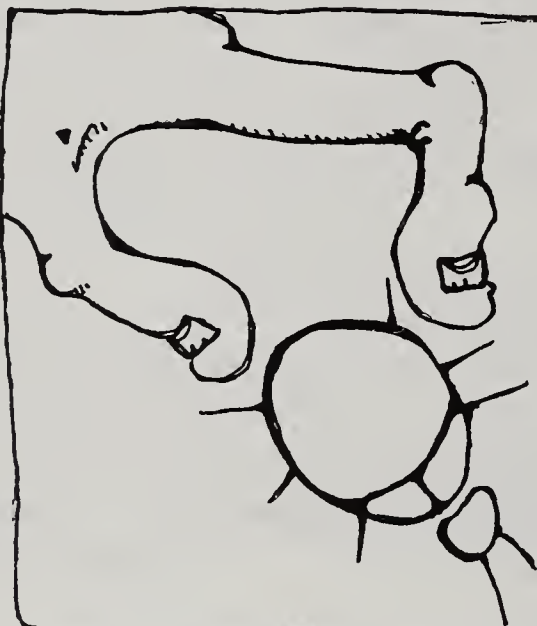
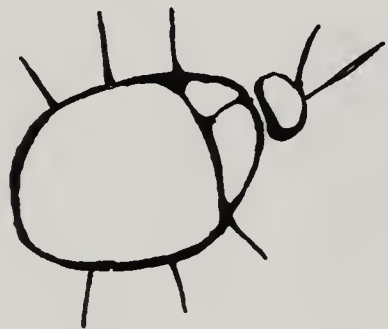
*the salt in my mouth  
is the only concrete reminder  
of the suffering inside of me*

*I am not good for anyone  
my mind  
my body  
my memories  
have all been used*

*jennifer shattuck*

I like to eat  
beetles

bY: MR  
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I like to  
eat Beetles



*Editorial Staff:*

*Allison Lahikainen*

*Jeff Landry*

*Jennifer Shattuck*

*Jeanne Hue*

*Advisor:        Arthur Marley*

*Those wishing to contribute to The Mole or to I Magazine may submit their writings to Mr. Marley in room 366.*

